



QUICK TIPS

## ACTIVITIES THAT QUALIFY FOR RIO MARKERS IN SOCIAL PROTECTION ACTIONS

The NDICI Global Europe Regulation established a target to dedicate at least 30% of the instrument’s budget to support climate objectives in the period 2021-2027. It also specifies that the NDICI Global Europe will contribute to the ambition of providing 7.5% of annual spending in 2024 and 10% in 2026 and 2027 towards biodiversity objectives.

The President of the European Commission, in her 2021 State of the Union speech, pledged an additional four billion euro towards climate goals. A pledge was also made to double the EU’s external funding for biodiversity, compared to 2014-2020, in particular for the most vulnerable countries.

These renewed targets significantly raise the EU ambition on climate and biodiversity finance to partner countries, reflecting the urgency called upon by the scientific

community to address the climate and biodiversity crises and the ambition of the European Green Deal.

Four ‘Rio markers’ were developed by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to identify the contribution of actions to the objectives of UN Rio Conventions (two markers related to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, one to the Convention on Biological Diversity and one to the Convention to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation). The Rio markers are used by DG INTPA to keep track of financial contributions to the Rio themes. In line with a methodology adopted by the OECD DAC, there are three possible scores (0, 1 and 2) for Rio markers. DG INTPA assesses that a certain percentage of an action’s budget can be considered to contribute to a Rio theme, based on the score of the corresponding Rio marker, as follows:

 **if Biodiversity, Desertification or Climate Change**

	<b>IS NOT TARGETED</b>	<b>RM=0</b>	0% BUDGET
	<b>IS A SIGNIFICANT OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>RM=1</b>	40% BUDGET
	<b>IS A PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>RM=2</b>	100% BUDGET

The scoring must be carried out in accordance with the corresponding [OECD DAC directives](#).<sup>1</sup>

An activity can be marked as “principal” when the objective (biodiversity, combating desertification, climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation) is explicitly stated as fundamental in the design of, or the motivation for, the activity. To be marked “significant”, the objective must be explicitly stated but is not a fundamental driver or motivation for undertaking and designing the activity.

<sup>1</sup>[OECD DAC \(2018\) Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting System \(CRS\) and the Annual DAC Questionnaire, Annexes – modules D and E \(Annex 18 – Rio markers\). DCD/DAC/STAT\(2018\)9/ADD2/FINAL.](#)



## Biodiversity

An activity should be classified as biodiversity-related if it promotes at least one of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity: (1) the conservation of biodiversity; (2) sustainable use of its components (ecosystems, species or genetic resources); or (3) fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of the utilisation of genetic resources.

**Eligibility criteria** are as follows:

The activity contributes to:

- a) Protection or enhancement of ecosystems, species or genetic resources through in-situ or ex-situ conservation, or remedying existing environmental damage; **or**
- b) Integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services concerns within recipient countries' development objectives and economic decision-making, through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research; **or**
- c) Developing countries' efforts to meet their obligations under the Convention.

The activity will be scored '**principal objective**' (i.e. RM2) if it directly and explicitly aims to achieve one or more of the above three criteria.

**Typical activities in social protection actions that can qualify for the Biodiversity Rio marker** include:

- ▶ Promoting awareness and training around the social impacts of nature conservation;
- ▶ Promoting payment for ecosystem services (supporting both nature and household incomes);
- ▶ Supporting measures that aim at reducing the social and economic consequences of environmental disasters (e.g. financial assistance through cash transfers). Cash transfers and public employment programmes can help families affected by extreme climate events or the progressive degradation of the environment (such as soil erosion and biodiversity loss).



## Combating Desertification

An activity should be classified as desertification-related if it aims at combating desertification or mitigating the effects of drought in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas through prevention and/or reduction of land degradation, rehabilitation of partly degraded land, or reclamation of desertified land.

**Eligibility criteria** are as follows:

The activity contributes to:

- a) Protecting or enhancing dryland ecosystems or remedying existing environmental damage; **or**
- b) Integrating desertification concerns in recipient countries' development objectives through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research; **or**
- c) Developing countries' efforts to meet their obligations under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

The activity will be scored '**principal objective**' (i.e. RM2) if it directly and explicitly aims to achieve one or more of the above criteria, including in the context of the realisation of national, sub-regional or regional action programmes.

**Typical activities in social protection actions that can qualify for the Desertification Rio marker** include:

- ▶ Supporting awareness activities regarding the social impacts of environmental changes in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas leading to desertification and drought (e.g. direct link to food and water shortages, migration, unemployment and limited access to social protection services);
- ▶ Supporting coordination of national social protection and anti-desertification policies.



© European Commission



## Climate Change Mitigation

An activity should be classified as climate change mitigation-related if it contributes to the objective of stabilising greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system by promoting efforts to reduce or limit GHG emissions or enhance GHG sequestration.

**Eligibility criteria** are the following:

The activity contributes to:

- a) The mitigation of climate change by limiting anthropogenic emissions of GHGs, including gases regulated by the Montreal Protocol; **or**
- b) The protection and/or enhancement of GHG sinks and reservoirs; **or**
- c) The integration of climate change concerns with the recipient countries' development objectives through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research; **or**
- d) Developing countries' efforts to meet their obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The activity will be scored '**principal objective**' (i.e. RM2) if it directly and explicitly aims to achieve one or more of the above four criteria.

**Typical activities in social protection actions that can qualify for the Climate Change Mitigation Rio marker** include:

- ▶ Supporting activities that promote employment in more sustainable sectors (facilitate re-employment through job placement services and relocation grants, and protect those who lose their jobs by means of income compensation measures in the form of unemployment benefits, social assistance or public employment programmes);
- ▶ Promoting skills development needed for job opportunities in more sustainable sectors as a consequence of green transition policies;
- ▶ Supporting partnerships between governments and social stakeholders which seek to promote long-term financing needs and establish sustainable funding mechanisms for the implementation of re-employment mechanisms.



## Climate Change Adaptation

An activity should be classified as climate change adaptation-related if it intends to reduce the vulnerability of human or natural systems to the current and expected impacts of climate change, including climate variability, by maintaining or increasing resilience, through increased ability to adapt to, or absorb, climate change stresses, shocks and variability and/or by helping reduce exposure to them.

This encompasses a range of activities from information and knowledge generation to capacity development, planning and the implementation of climate change adaptation actions.

**Eligibility criteria** are the following:

An activity is eligible for the climate change adaptation marker if:

- a) The climate change adaptation objective is explicitly indicated in the activity documentation; **and**
- b) The activity contains specific measures targeting the definition above.

To guide scoring, a three-step approach is recommended as a 'best practice', in particular to justify a Rio Marker 2 score:

- ▶ **Setting out the context of risks, vulnerabilities and impacts related to climate variability and climate change:** for a project to be considered as one that contributed to adaptation to climate change, the context of climate vulnerability should be set out clearly using a robust evidence base. This could take a variety of forms, including use of material from existing analyses and reports, or original, bespoke climate vulnerability assessment analysis carried out as part of the preparation of a project.
- ▶ **Stating the intent to address the identified risks, vulnerabilities and impacts in project documentation:** the project should set out how it intends to address the context- and location-specific climate change vulnerabilities, as set out in existing analyses, reports or the project's climate vulnerability assessment.
- ▶ **Demonstrating a clear and direct link between the identified risks, vulnerabilities and impacts and the specific project activities:** the project should explicitly address risk and vulnerabilities under current and future climate change as identified in the project documentation.

**Typical activities in social protection actions that can qualify for the Climate Change Adaptation Rio marker** include:<sup>2</sup>

- Supporting safety net mechanisms that seek to build resilience to climate change and reduce extreme poverty (such as the productive safety net programme in Ethiopia or the hunger safety net programme in Kenya);
- Boosting cash transfer programmes which address specific climate-related risks as a way to develop adaptation measures to protect households against the financial losses and damage associated with the impact of climate change and environmental degradation;
- Promoting activities that support productive assets and seek to safeguard them in cases of extreme weather events (for example through disaster risk or weather-index insurance schemes);
- Promoting measures that include employment injury benefits for workers who become victims of an environmental hazard at work, including heatwaves (e.g. construction workers in countries experiencing extremely high temperatures acquire health conditions that necessitate medical treatment and sometimes income replacement if they become disabled and unable to work).

<sup>2</sup> OECD DAC Rio Markers for Climate Handbook